

PEACE NEWS

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EUROPEAN SCENE

FACTS and MORALS

THE extraordinary anomalies that exist in the food-situation of Europe are vividly brought home by the following excerpts from letters we have received:—

DENMARK. "Conditions are shocking. It is, for example, a fact that the Danish farmers can't earn a living selling their products at the price England is paying; but even then Denmark, to keep its own market, had to sign 'treaties' which bind it not to sell more than certain quantities to other countries. Just a few days ago I read about some millions of preserved eggs: England didn't want them; Belgium and France wanted them, but Denmark was not allowed to send them before January next, and that will probably be too late, as Belgium and France are now buying eggs somewhere else.

"The worst thing of all is that conditions like this are stirring up a feeling very far from the friendliest feeling towards the English which has hitherto been so dominant in Denmark. It is not too much to say that even hatred is born in wide circles." (Vanlose. Dec. 8).

ITALY. "Many of the poor people wish Mussolini back again already for they think (poor fools) that he would bring order again. Amongst the poor also are a number who wish for Communism. Prices are rising so steeply this last five weeks, especially food prices, that one wonders what will happen. But the Italians are not a violent people and stand quite a lot of misery quite meekly. The Black Market (open) goes on flourishing as before.

"Italy is certainly in a bad state, but one wonders what on earth will put the country on its feet—there just isn't enough to go round, and the distribution of what is to be found on the Black Market would make little difference, save for the moral effect, which would be excellent—it would clear the glittering shop-windows. The farmers, too, hoard their grain and olives." (Rome. Dec. 15).

GERMANY. "No coals, no light, and too much to starve but not enough to live on! Well, wait and see and hope for the best. . . We get very little reading now, as it is too cold to sit, and every evening darker. . . Good things may be for others, but for us here the heavens seem empty. No-one who does not have to live the life can realise what it is. Even those on relief work cannot. They see the misery, they try to help and make it easier to bear; but they themselves go back to their luxuriously furnished over-heated flats, with their well-prepared meals placed before them, and cannot possibly understand how desperately everything is. . .

"Hermann's had a day in bed today. His hands are so bad. They were frozen last year, and now the frost places have all broken, so he stayed in bed to give them a complete rest. The tragedy is there is nothing to be got, either at a chemist's or anywhere else. . ."

(Berlin. Nov. 5).



Thus every great war sows the seed of resentment and moral inertia, to spring up in another and greater: until the vicious circle is broken, either by total annihilation or the renunciation of war itself.

THE WORLD'S CAPTIVES

Millions await general amnesty

TODAY, throughout the world, there are millions of people who are kept in prison or are living hunted lives under various pretexts, which have arisen directly out of the war.

Prisoners-of-war undoubtedly include the greatest number of these people. But there are many military prisoners undergoing long sentences for desertion, as well as tens of thousands of deserters carrying on a furtive and miserable existence in hiding.

Then there are the political prisoners, victims of various purges, who are undergoing punishment for deviations from the present political orthodoxy of their countries. How many this class includes is impossible to say, as countries like Russia, Poland and Yugoslavia publish no figures, but it can safely be said that the number of men and women imprisoned on political charges throughout the world reaches millions.

Very few of these people would have been in prison had it not been for the war. That event involved them in situations where they were led to acts against current regulations, except in the cases of prisoners-of-war, for whose imprisonment there is not even the excuse of a breach of law. Now the war is over, whether one believes it was justified or not, there seems no justice in morality or even in common law for detaining such people.

Evident injustices

Since the end of the war it has become evident to many people that some kind of amnesty is necessary to end the evident injustices of the present situation, and there have even been some achievements in this direction. In Canada and South Africa the governments have granted a virtual amnesty by announcing their intention of abandoning the search for deserters at large. In the United States a campaign for the release of imprisoned C.O.s has resulted in partial success by the new parole arrangements which will release many men whose sentences are unfinished.

by GEORGE WOODCOCK

In England, a series of protests against the treatment of prisoners-of-war has resulted in at least better camp conditions. A campaign for amnesty of military and political prisoners, initiated by the Freedom Defence Committee at the end of the war, met with little success because of its premature inception. But now the cause has been re-opened by the Catholic Herald registering its demand for a world-wide amnesty for political prisoners and prisoners-of-war, with support from George Bernard Shaw, John Middleton Murry, Gilbert Murray, the Bishops of Oxford and Chichester, and other well-known men.

The demand of the Catholic Herald is to be welcomed as an important contribution towards ending the international scandal of unjust imprisonments. The only fault I can find with it is that it is couched in too general terms, and ignores both the concrete details of the situation in England, and also the military prisoners and deserters who form a considerable proportion of the persecuted elements. I raise this question because, while we must clearly try to secure an international cessation of vindictive imprisonments, we must begin by attacking the situation at home, in the hope of making an example to the rest of the world.

In England the largest class is that of German prisoners who still, a year and a half after the war, are used for forced labour. They are virtually serfs, working for tiny wages, living in conditions which have been the

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subject of a number of unpleasant revelations. Their sole offence was that they obeyed orders and fought at the command of their governments, just like any British conscript.

The next largest class in England is that of deserters and military offenders of various kinds. Many of these are undergoing imprisonment at Dartmoor or at the various military prisons and detention camps. The harsh discipline and brutality of military prisons are notorious, yet in some ways those in prison are no worse off than the men in hiding. The exact number of these is doubtful, but it is officially admitted that there are twenty thousand deserters at large, and to these must be added thousands of men wanted by the civil authorities for evading medical examinations. The lives of these men are unpleasant in the extreme. Furtiveness and distrust are their constant companions, and they are beset by the material difficulties of finding safe hiding places, work where no cards are needed, food without ration books. It is little wonder that some of them have resorted to black marketing and theft in order to maintain themselves.

Moral breakdown

But the social consequences of this life are perhaps even less dreadful than the consequences to the men themselves. I have known men with good potentialities for whom four or five years on the run has meant an almost complete moral and intellectual breakdown.

The causes of these men's circumstances are almost always in their wartime life, which led them first to commit their "offence" and has since forced them to continue in an anti-social life for fear of savage imprisonment. The only solution is to declare an amnesty which will enable them to return into society as useful citizens instead of forcing them to continue their increasingly bitter struggle.

There remains one class of English prisoners—the politicals. In this country, since there is no political code, all political prisoners are gaol

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

The end of Europe's Balance of Power

COMMENTARY

by

John Middleton Murry

ON the whole, I think Mr. Bevin was right in giving a moderately optimistic tone to his recent survey of foreign affairs in general and work done at the United Nations in particular: not because there is really much solid ground for optimism, but because it is a Foreign Secretary's duty to try to create an atmosphere. And, of course, he had to consider the Labour malcontents: against whom, incidentally, he made the very good point that, whereas a year ago they were full of indignation over British intervention in Indonesia, that same British intervention has now produced a peaceful settlement which, without it, would have been impossible.

But Mr. Bevin laid stress on the British policy of "treating every issue on its own merits" as against the contention of the Labour malcontents that Britain should follow a Russophil policy, on the ground that Britain's Socialism was more closely related to Russia's Communism than it was to America's Capitalism. That contention, in itself, is wholly mistaken. But it needs to be deliberately demolished, because it is based on a dangerous moral equivocation. It is not adequately met by a declaration that "every issue shall be treated on its own merits."

A new system wanted

THAT is a traditional maxim of British foreign policy, naturally beloved of professional diplomats. It was adequate in the heyday of diplomacy, which were the days—the 50 years before 1914—when the "balance of power" was a rational

conception of European politics. To treat every issue on its own merits was a pragmatic rule of thumb. It meant that every issue should be, if possible, peacefully adjusted by reference to the actual balance of power. If the British Foreign Office considered that, by throwing its very considerable weight more on the side of A's claims on B than on the side of B's claims against A, the balance of power was more likely to be even, it threw its weight on the side of A's claims, irrespective of the intrinsic morality of the case. (Anyhow, who was to determine that?). That all sounds very immoral; but it was not a bad system, for all that. It gave Europe peace from 1870 to 1914.

But today it has no meaning. There is no balance of power in Europe, and no earthly chance of establishing one. To treat every question on its merits now means one of two things: either to attempt to establish what justice indeed demands, or to try to discover what, in fact, can be agreed on by the opponents, of whom Britain, in European affairs, is one.

The German problem

THE first of these is Utopian. Soviet Russia and Britain have no principles of justice in common by which

justice in any particular issue can be established. What, for example, is justice to Germany? By and large, English sentiment is agreed that Germany should be united, self-governing by the methods of Western democracy, and given full economic freedom except that she must be prevented from making war and must meet just demands for reparation. Russia has entirely different ideas: what they are is hard to determine, because they seem to be inconsistent, but they are probably all related to Russian military "security." Perhaps they reduce to: getting a Communist government in control of Germany if she can, and if not, keeping Germany as weak as possible. Legitimate purposes, perhaps, if the objective of military security is regarded as still reasonable. But they have no relation to any possible conception of "justice." To settle the German question on its merits—in the sense of settling it by some acknowledged principle of justice—is, today, a fantasy.

The second possible meaning of the phrase is to settle each disputed issue in isolation, by a species of poker-playing, "getting tough" with one another in the hope of finding the absolute minimum of the demands of each—i.e., the demands which must be satisfied or the demander will break off negotiation, and trust to his sheer power to obtain them. But this is no coherent policy at all for Britain, unless there has been previously established in the mind of the Foreign Secretary a consistent

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SHADOW ON THE FUTURE— CONSCRIPTION

"ALTHOUGH the Army must be essentially an instrument to carry out its normal functions it can also be adapted to making men better than they would otherwise be," (Col. Wigg, in the debate on the No Conscription Amendment, Nov. 18, 1946). Col. Wigg is a politician, so we know his words must have been carefully chosen and had a definite meaning. They should repay a closer scrutiny.

"The Army must be essentially an instrument to carry out its *normal functions*. What are the normal functions of an army? We confess that we know of only one: to kill on the word of command. Perhaps there are others which have been introduced since we were in the O.T.C. Perhaps there were others even then—we were not always a very attentive cadet, and it may be just an unlucky accident that the only command still hovering in our memory is "At the throat thrust!"

But (we are getting tired of this "we," so we'll change over to "I" now) I do recall quite well the sense of degradation evoked by obeying that command; and I do recall that the disgust and contempt I felt were in no way diminished by the fact that it was the school chaplain who gave it. He, no doubt, believed it is duty. The public-school ideals of the Christian and the Gentleman are not always easy to reconcile. Possibly it hurt him more than it hurt me (as on some other painful occasions) to exchange his surplice for khaki on Monday afternoons. But it would have hurt him still more to resign his commission, and me, though I was revolted, to revolt.

Not many boys of seventeen have the courage to make themselves conspicuous for conscience' sake—and I doubt whether one year more makes all that difference.

There was much fine talk in the Parliamentary debate, on Conscription as an education in citizenship. The Army, we were told, is going to be radically democratised. Abolition of compulsory Church parade and free distribution of condoms are merely forerunners of the vast reforms we can look forward to. O wonderful! Let the Handelian Chorus of the Progressive rejoice over these symbols of public enlightenment. They are symbols indeed.

"The Army must be essentially an instrument . . ." Precisely, and so must every man or boy in it. To be trained and treated as an instrument is the precondition of treating others as instruments: of forgetting the enemy as a person and remembering him only as a target, of turning men into dead bodies.

It is no accident that the authorities imposing conscription are concerned with the spread of V.D. But the physical evil is slight compared with the moral evil it reflects; and that they cannot combat, without combatting conscription itself. It takes an officer-chaplain to teach that persons are ends in themselves, on Sundays, and means all the rest of the week; or to tell men to make themselves conspicuous for conscience' sake, in one thing, and one thing only.

If the abolition of compulsory Church parade means a reduction in officer-chaplains, it will certainly clear the air: for "The Army is essentially"—a degradation of men and women; and because it is that, it can never be adapted to make them more than superficially "better than they would otherwise be." The officer-chaplain was a solecism: so, for the same reasons, is Col. Wigg's sentence.

DOING UNTO OTHER NATIONS

by Percy Redfern

"WHERE but to think is to be full of sorrow." If "leaden-eyed despairs" were the penalty for living in 1821, still worse is their return in 1947.

Nevertheless daylight does increase upon our world, and there are snowdrop signs of hope. Housewives who hated the name of German now offer tea to prisoners of war. Bad and shameful as the detention of prisoners is, good comes from most of the contacts of home-keeping Britons with real Germans. And, abroad, officers as deeply sunk in prejudice, to begin with, as is Sir Alan Herbert, come round to saying privately, that eighty per cent of the Germans are decent and likeable people. Meanwhile, thousands of food parcels bridge the Rhine.

Even disillusionment serves. In November last (on the 23rd) the Times Literary Supplement gave several columns to a book newly published in France, by the French ambassador in Warsaw from 1935 to 1939. This sympathetic account of M. Leon Noel's "notes and reflections" says nothing for Germany, but it damages the pedestals of other powers. We read of official suppressions and coverings up in the interests of the war and of "large scale incinerations" by officials of their diplomatic documents. We re-discover the fact that Germany was not the only enemy from the north active in 1938 against Czechoslovakia. We get some notion of the endless manoeuvres of power politics "against both Bolshevik Russia and Germany" from 1921 onwards. Hitler is not justified but something more is done to explain him.

National righteousness that reared their brazen fronts during war already suffer corrosion. Again, the battle was not of heaven against hell. It was a struggle of millions victimised by their own international armed anarchy. Yet this is not to say enough. The final facts are

moral. Crossed by many lesser, the major evil was and is that self-seeking of nations which elevates and decorates for our undoing what is no more than jungle law.

As in 1919, the surviving great powers are uneasy about the anarchy. To-day it is the morning after the mass bombing, the obliterations that culminated in the atomic bombs. Such destruction is frightening. What has been suffered by others (says each great power) must not be felt by us. There must be no possibility of a third world war. But where is that world consent to perpetual peace which, ultimately, is the only security against renewals of war?

War pays

The old difficulty stands. The powers seeking to end war are the powers which in the past have profited by it. The atomic bomb is atrocious, but it assisted conquest. It gave VJ Day, and restored access to rubber, tin and oil. The insecurity resulting hangs round all our necks like the albatross on the Ancient Mariner. Who can believe that the world as a whole will always accept an abolition of war which would leave its past gains safely in the hands of the countries recently victorious?

Five continents, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, witness to lands taken from previous holders through war. Though the present rule may have been long accepted, each possession stands as an incentive to one more contest before the last of all bombs is dropped. To keep their world stable, therefore, the great possessing powers turn to security by force, as agreed between themselves. So comes conscription in Britain, with disarmament only a name for such a union of forces as will permit each contributing force to be reduced. So have come the lordships over Germany, disastrous though they are seen to be, and the chains upon Italy and Japan. But lordship by conquest already is

THANKS!

CHRISTMAS presents to the PN Fund included one of £10 from a subscriber who "hopes to be in a better position to help" in the New Year, when he is no longer embarrassed by sickness in the home; and another of £5 from an anonymous donor whose post-war credits have just been paid, "in fulfilment of a promise made to the Editor several years ago."

These and other supporters, no less generous, have made the December total a record since I took over the editorship. The staff of PN join with me in sending their warm thanks to these readers for their encouragement. With your continued help, PN will not fail.

THE EDITOR.

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bringing new and worse national inequalities, political, economic and moral. A fire of resentment begins to smoulder within the very structure of the new peace.

Force by itself fails. There must be a moral element. But what morality is valid except the old one of fair and equal dealing? Of sharing with other peoples, as we have the power, exactly those freedoms, rights and material values that we want for ourselves? Hope may take courage: this is no more than the British Government has promised to India. Difficulties have not forbidden the faith that actual right-doing will in the end prove to have been politic as well. And what is good in India cannot be for ever contradicted elsewhere.

Total kindness

Benevolence that stops short of equal dealing is only whitened hostility. Against the malignance of oppression, starvation and fear that total war has added to the provocations of the previous inequalities, total kindness becomes the only possible power. If we cannot create a new order inspired by such equal fellowship, we can imagine and proclaim the joyousness and security of such true relations. And as pacifists, independent of policies and parties, this, I believe, is our business.

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Peace and Democracy

IT is encouraging that you should have added a commendatory review of "A People who loved Peace" to David Wills' excellent article on Norway. The Peace Movement would certainly benefit from the discipline of Norwegian experience, and Roy Walker's detailed survey of the struggle is essential homework for every pacifist who takes his civic responsibilities seriously.

For that reason it is perhaps a pity that your review did not mention the almost inevitable limitations of "A People who loved Peace." It deals with the impact of fascism on Norway without tracing and without making full acknowledgment to the growth of democracy which made the resistance possible. The lesson of Norway is not of a people who saved democracy because they loved peace, but of a people who gained peace because they understand democracy.

DONALD PORT.

Where are they?

Where and when are to be found these disgraceful pacifists who, as reported in this week's Commentary, "Talk wildly as though a capitalist free society was a monstrous humbug, compared to the shining sincerity of a totalitarian socialist society"?

One might expect to find in some papers, but not Peace News, 'straw pacifists' set up for the joy of knocking them down. Are we to take it that any pacifist who, has the temerity to criticise either this country or America must be subject to this kind of abuse in Peace News, just as those who are non-pacifists must elsewhere be dubbed, "fellow travellers" and "crypts"?

H. HILDITCH.

23 Tixall Road,
Birmingham, 28.

L.H. and Theology

I GREATLY appreciated Laurence Housman on the "Way, the Truth and the Life." Anything from his pen is always a great challenge and inspiration, but it seemed that he rather depreciated the motive which a true theology (or a mature Christian religion) can give to this humanistic philosophy.

He quotes with approval the teaching of the New Testament, "Love your neighbour as yourself; love your enemies; overcome evil with good," and then adds, "they are entirely untheological." But that was not Christ's reasoning. His inspiring motif for such behaviour was theological, in the true sense of the word. He urged men to love their enemies, "that ye may be children of your Father which is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

In actual experience I find this works. The great motive of my pacifism is that "the Father which is in Heaven" has ever been a pacifist towards me, that He has not dealt with me after my sins, that He has ever been seeking to overcome my evil with His good love. In that I find a thrilling and inspiring motive which in my native pugnacity and inheritance of the "old Adam," I could never find in any merely humanistic philosophy; and I suspect it is so with men and women at large.

(Rev.) EDWIN FOLEY.

38a St. James Road,
Watford, Herts.

Col. Blimp-van-Winkle

MAY I point out to J. M. M. that German scientists are already working in the USA, this country, and now, it is proposed, in Australia, on

V-weapons and atomic research. Presumably all these countries, in "inviting" these scientists, were primarily interested in making themselves "strong" in the cause of peace. Why, then, classify Sokolovsky as the Rip van Winkle when he is only a matter of twelve months behind the times? Perhaps even that is an exaggeration, for those same arguments are still being introduced in support of peace-time conscription in this country.

G. WILKINSON.

Ellenglade,
Cubert, Near Newquay,
Cornwall.

Quaker Peace Testimony.

I'M sorry your correspondent finds it unacceptable that the Kingdom of Heaven is "within you," but his quarrel is with a very much higher authority than myself; and the best witness being his own experience, I see no reason to attempt a defence. If the reward of a clear conscience is to be regarded as soothing syrup for the soul I won't object; but it's a svrrun I, for one, would always welcome. As a "reward" I find it more inspiring than harps and haloes. That is a matter of opinion; but the meaning of "Heaven" as explained by Jesus—a state of being, realisable here and now—seems to me to be beyond dispute.

REGINALD REYNOLDS.

20 Jubilee Place,
S.W.3.

Peace News is open for the expression of all points of view relevant to pacifism. Articles in it, whether signed or unsigned, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Peace Pledge Union, of which it is the weekly organ. Nor does the acceptance of advertisements imply any endorsement of, or PPU connexion with, the matter advertised.

PACIFISM UNDER OCCUPATION

IT may perhaps be of some interest for readers of Peace News to know how the Danish section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom succeeded in getting through the war and the German occupation with the same membership as it had before the war.

First, however, it may be noted that the Danish section is very strong, having over 20,000 members, which would correspond to a membership of, say, 200,000 in England. This is due mainly to two factors, first that the official policy of the country had for many years before the war been markedly pacifist, so that our appeal did not go very much against the grain, and secondly, that the section was founded by very good organisers and has had very devoted collaborators.

THE INVASION

From the very first when the Germans invaded the country, it was felt that the best thing we could do was to continue our activity to the greatest possible extent. The Germans had promised not to interfere in internal Danish matters, as there had been very little fighting, conditions up to 1943 differed from those of other occupied countries, and so there should have been nothing to prevent us from carrying on as usual. In reality, however, the presence of the Germans meant that all public criticism of themselves and their doings was prohibited.

Public meetings were prohibited by our Government, but we continued to have as many smaller meetings as possible. As time went on, and it seemed probable that our activity might some day be forbidden, we prepared to go underground.

We advised people all over the country to form small groups who should meet regularly in the homes of members. To these groups were sent articles which they might read aloud and discuss. Such articles dealt for instance with the history of the peace

movement, the history of the WIL, Jane Addams, education for peace, non-violence, the Quakers, etc. The idea was that these groups should continue work if our organisation as such should be dissolved. As a matter of fact it never was, but these efforts helped very much to strengthen in the minds of members the ideas for which our League stood.

Later on when the end of the war seemed to draw near we concentrated our attention on post-war problems, a subject on which very little information was accessible either in the German-controlled newspapers which of course never visualised anything but a German victory, or in the illegal press, which was mainly concerned with the war-effort. For this purpose material was smuggled in from Sweden and circulated in our groups; material from a Copenhagen study circle on the subject was used in the same manner.

We should never have been able to satisfy our members at such a difficult time if we had not given them practical work to do. In the first instance we stood side by side with the other women's organisations in certain national endeavours to help the poor and old people (e.g., cooking marmalade from waste fruit, etc.). One wanted to show that we were all one large family.

AID TO JEWS

More important than this national solidarity, was the solidarity that was shown with a group of 300 Jewish children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, who had accepted the WIL's invitation to come and stay in country homes for some time before proceeding to Palestine. They came just on the outbreak of war, but they were prevented from leaving the country by the German occupation and the war between Germany and Russia. So we just had to provide for them as well as we could under the very difficult situation with so many Nazis among us. Much good work was done by a number of our self-sacrificing members, and many others

by

ELSE ZEUTHEN

all over the country helped by getting money, clothes, etc. But even to the great majority, who were not directly concerned in the work, the thought that the WIL associated itself with this relief work for the young Jews was of great importance, because it expressed in actual fact our violent disagreement with Hitler's mad racial theories and inhumanity.

When finally the Jews were persecuted also in Denmark and had to leave the country, some of our young friends were caught and sent with other Danish Jews (500 in all) to Theresienstadt where they would probably have starved to death if they had not received parcels of food from home. The WIL almost immediately set about organising the sending, though it was strictly prohibited by the Gestapo, but after some time circles with a wider backing took over the job, and in the end even the Germans gave their consent.

READY FOR PEACE

It was quite a natural thing for us as the next step to take up the idea of international relief work when the war was over. Already in 1943 we joined in forming with the Danish section of the War Resisters International and the Society of Friends an underground relief institution "Peace Volunteers," which has now done good work in six different countries, besides having offered a good scope of activity for many young men and women who for reasons of conscience were prevented from taking part in the so-called "active" underground movement.

Our little bulletin appeared regularly all through the war. We did not submit it to censorship, but of course we had to be careful what we wrote. Here as well as at our meetings we never abandoned the ideals of the WIL: that we were against war and militarism and for peace, co-operation, democracy, freedom, humanity and tolerance. We could not put down in writing what we thought about the Nazi methods or ideas, or we should have been arrested and our organisation dissolved.

We did not leave the Germans in doubt as to our standpoint. Together with the other women's organisations we sent in a number of protests to the German authorities against their acts of persecution and terror, and a number of appeals, e.g., to send back the prisoners from concentration camps. Of course our members were informed as to our action in this respect.

We did not, as an organisation, take part in the "active" resistance movement; many of our members did so individually; but there were too many absolute pacifists among us to commit ourselves as a group to the amount of violence involved in the underground movement. As time wore on and we seemed more and more to live under a system of terror, feelings in this country reached an extreme degree of bitterness against the Germans. We never grew tired of emphasizing that hatred and revenge were not ennobling feelings and that even if we could not help hating Nazism and what it stood for, we ought not to hate Germans as individuals. Also in the preparations for our relief activity we always pointed out that we intended to help allied and enemy countries alike.

Readers may think that what I have here described amounts to a very small effort, and I am not going to deny it; but nevertheless the underlying ideas had sufficient truth and validity to prevent members from leaving the organisation in despair. Also, it must not be forgotten that when the liberation came, it was very important for us to be strong and active, because then it became a prime object of all peace-loving people to oppose all the nationalist and militarist feelings engendered by the occupation. But to that I am going to revert in a later article.

Words of Peace - No. 202

LOVE AND DISTRUST

"Mutual trust and mutual love are not trust and no love. The real love is to love them that hate you, to love your neighbour even though you distrust him. I have sound reasons for distrusting the English official world. If my love is sincere I must love the Englishman in spite of my distrust. Of what avail is my love if it be only so long as I trust my friends? Even thieves do that. They become enemies immediately the trust is gone."

—Gandhi.

THE DARKER SIDE OF PATRIOTISM

Avellino, Dec. 16

BY FREDRICK LOHR

WE had just come from the cinema, where we had seen a news-reel of the trial in Rome of the German Generals Mackensen and Maeltzer. This trial had ended, as was expected, in the death sentence. I asked my companion, a de-mobbed army medical officer, for details and he offered this story:

"This trial, like so many others conducted throughout Europe since your V.E. day, has its origin in the Partisan Resistance movement. After the armistice arranged between Badoglio and the Allies, the Germans in Italy were enemies in occupation — as, indeed, we had really considered them to be from the beginning. One day in the Via Rasella, Rome, a number of Italian 'patriots' ambushed a column of German soldiers by placing in the rubbish bin of a street cleaner a bomb timed to explode at the precise moment the Germans passed. It duly did so, and from the windows of adjacent buildings the partisans opened fire with tommy guns upon the stricken troop. 32 Germans were killed outright and many more were wounded. All the assailants escaped.

Reprisals

"Subsequently the German Command issued a warning that unless within a given period of time the guerillas gave themselves up, reprisals would be taken upon Italian hostages in the proportion of ten to one. In due course, the days of grace having failed to bring the surrender of the partisans, the Germans wreaked their vengeance. Hostages were taken from the prisons and shot; they included two boys aged 13, an old man of 80, and

several women. By a mistake, I suppose, of hasty counting, 333 people were done to death instead of the threatened 320."

"And what," I asked, "is your opinion of this typical example of Teutonic brutality?" I received the unexpected reply that my companion took a poor view of the resistance movement generally, saying that more often than not it achieved nothing by recklessly jeopardising the lives of innocent civilians.

"Military necessity"

"But surely," I protested, "you cannot justify such a ruthless act of revenge?" "Is it a matter of revenge," he replied, "or is it not a necessity of military control? Many thousands of soldiers' lives are bound up in the question... The German front was but 20 miles from Rome. Had they dealt leniently with guerillas they would have risked being destroyed. The German Command acted as we Italians were compelled to act in Abyssinia and Albania, as the British have acted in their Empire, and as all Army Commands have acted in this war. In the matter of illegal civilian combatants there is no other practically effective reply but reprisals of this kind."

He then recounted a similar incident which occurred in Florence about the same time. Four Carabinieri (State Police) waylaid and killed a number of German soldiers. The Germans issued the same threat as at Rome and the Carabinieri gave themselves up to save the lives of the hostages. "That," said my informant, "is an example of real partisan heroism; but the others...

they preferred the sacrifice of women and children."

The more one learns of the Resistance movements which were so enthusiastically encouraged, and even initiated, by the Allies, the more dangerously irresponsible such encouragement appears to have been. Much has been made of the undoubted heroism displayed by some partisans but little is said of the terrible price paid for the slight military advantage gained by it.

Humanity and guerillas

Occupying armies have always provoked the response of guerilla warfare, and always will. Those people who believe that war can, or should, be humanised, ought to consider more fully the circumstances that surround an occupying army faced with partisan activity. Palestine to-day is confronting Britain with just such a problem, and the British Press does not seem to regard the heroism of the Jews with the same enthusiasm as it applauded the exploits of the partisans against Germany.

How is an occupying army to react 'humanely' against terrorism? The history of Imperialism, whether British, French, German, Italian, Russian or Japanese, shows that disproportionate reprisals is the method generally used to combat and check guerillas, and we must suppose—in the requirements of military order—that this is the only reaction which effectively meets the threat of terrorism. Resistance movements of this kind manifest the impossibility of conducting warfare by the "chessboard" principles of classical military strategy, and raises yet again the whole question of the progressive immorality and inhumanity of war itself.

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DEMOCRACY — French and English

by BRUCE ODSBUR

AS a Pacifist, persuaded that I have sometimes suggested that the right thing to do, after a General Election, would be to invite the party with the smallest representation to form a Government.

For some reason the idea has never caught on (another confirmation of my theory). Even the tiniest political sects have remained quite obstinately indifferent. But a prophet is never without honour . . . and I see that those inveterate constitution-mongers, the French, have at last seen the light, or something like it.

Seriously, the appointment of M. Blum to the Premiership is one more proof that the conditions of democracy, as we in the Commonwealth and America understand it, do not exist in France. It is unlucky that such assertions are usually made by the enemies of democracy—unlucky not least because they provoke the counter-assertion that democracy is everywhere and always workable—but that does not alter the fact: and the fact, in France, has a long taproot in history. The problem confronting M. Blum can, indeed, be traced beyond the French Revolution, to the time of the Huguenot defeats.

Protestant democracy

English and American democracy is, to a greater extent than we commonly realise, the creation of English Protestantism. The sovereignty of Parliament was proclaimed by the Puritans of the seventeenth century, because Parliament was supposed to represent the Elect—those who had discovered God's will for themselves, and were, therefore, in a better position to govern the nation than the Head of the Church of England. Parliament has been made to represent all classes, as successive generations of Nonconformists have recalled that the Elect were not confined to the bourgeoisie. Moreover, as the King had been turned into a figurehead, Parliament has become *de facto* Head of the Church of England itself. The institution has acquired the sanction of practically all the religious sentiment of this country.

The name of "God's will" has changed. The authority of the Bible is invoked as seldom as the authority of dogma. Were it otherwise, this consensus would hardly have come about. But the traditional values of Protestantism are still the implicit values of England. Parliamentary Government is revered because it stands for the freedom of all men to discover and proclaim what is right. Parliament is still expected to do what is "right": and our standards of right and wrong are derived from Protestant Christianity. Hence, among other things, our difficulty in understanding those Governments which accept a totally different standard.

No toleration

No such development has taken place in France. Fewer people in France have ever believed that it was best for men to discover what was right for themselves. Certainly Parliament has never acquired the religious sanction that attaches to an

majorities are generally wrong, that the right thing to do, after a General Election, would be to invite the party with the smallest representation to form a Government.

institution supposed, whether rightly or wrongly, to express the free conscience of the people. The French Church is answerable to the Pope, not to the Elect within its ranks. It could never have come under the sway of a Parliament, even had it not been estranged from a democracy championed chiefly by rationalists. And the rationalists, even though they may originally have been rationalising, defended Parliamentary Government not on conscientious, but utilitarian, grounds. Consequently, rationalism has now given way to Communism—whose attitude towards democracy is not dissimilar to that of Catholicism.

The one thing that Catholics and Communists have in common is their distrust of the free conscience of the people. Neither, therefore, value democracy for its own sake, but only as a means of implementing their own principles. And, since their principles are diametrically opposed, give-and-take between the parties is impossible. The working of the Constitution is paralysed, dictatorship becomes practically inevitable, either through the victory of one over the other, or the intervention of a third party antagonistic to both.

Protestant and Pacifist

Hence, as I see it, the significance of the Protestant minority in France. Asserting the principle of the freedom of conscience, this minority finds itself detached from all the main political parties; and, because, it is united on a principle rather than a programme, is incapable of forming one itself. But just because it is consciously engaged in watering the seed of democracy, it is deeply and honestly concerned with political events. It stands, in fact, in a position closely analogous to that of the Pacifist minority in this country—and if I had to point to the French newspaper most nearly equivalent to *Peace News*, I would point to the Protestant "Réforme."

Naturally, the French Protestants are more tinged with nationalism than English Pacifists; and the free conscience they stand for is conceived in specifically Christian terms—though that may actually link them more closely with us than the French war-resisters themselves, since the latter, unlike their English counterparts, are predominantly anti-clerical. But in most other respects the difference between Protestant and Pacifist lies less in conviction than circumstance.

The French Protestant has to point the way out of a desperate situation; we have to prevent such a situation arising. The absolute supremacy of the free individual conscience is endangered, in France, by parties whose systems of thought deny it; in England, it is acknowledged by all the major political parties—hence the toleration of conscientious objectors, incomprehensible to a utilitarian democracy. But, just because the principle we affirm is already widely accepted, the burden rests on us of clarifying it: and this is a task as exacting and vital as any the French Protestants face.

For, if there is small danger in England of this principle being lost sight of through the elaboration of opposing systems of thought, there is a quite strong likelihood of its being lost sight of through the absence of any thought whatever. That very blurring of dogmatic distinctions, which has united the Church of England with the Nonconformist sects in a common respect for Parliament, may yet prove to be our undoing. Neglect of precise formulations may result in neglect of the realities they once enshrined.

Simply by insisting once again on the supremacy of conscience, therefore, we perform an important service. But we shall do more, I think, when we adopt the practice of our oldest pacifist society, and that most clearly derived from the original

WHAT MAY PACIFISM MEAN?

THERE is only one argument against pacifism that really carries any weight. It is the time—and Tribunal-honoured one which begins, "What would you do if . . .?"

by F. A. LEA

Whoever signs the Pledge, "I renounce war," does commit himself to the assertion that he would sooner see his family and closest friends done to death than adopt the only means that might, in some circumstances save them. That is a simple fact which, although obvious always to war-resisters on the Continent, became clear to many English Pacifists—even Pacifists with refugee friends and relations—after the last war had begun. Those who are tempted by Pacifism to-day would do well to consider it carefully before they join the Peace Pledge Union.

For this fact, squarely confronted, conditions all honest Pacifist propaganda, and is the starting-point of all honest Pacifist thought. Let us glance at one or two of the conclusions that follow from it.

(1). Since nobody can possibly be sure that he would endure to the end in the event of the worst befalling, Pacifism is absolutely incompatible with self-righteousness, or intolerance towards non-pacifists.

(2). There can be no such thing as a "near-pacifist," or if there is, he is by no means what he is generally pictured. The near-pacifist, I take it, would be an individual prepared to let his closest friends, but not his family—or perhaps his wife, but not his children—be done to death, etc. Such a person is hard to believe in. If there is such a thing as a near-pacifist, I would suggest that he is more likely to be found in the British Legion than the National Peace Council, and is probably to be distinguished chiefly by the zeal of his opposition to Pacifism—because he is the most keenly aware of its challenge.

(3). Nothing is an argument for Pacifism that is not an argument for something more precious to men than even the lives of their own families and friends. That, obviously, cannot be the lives of others whom we have never seen. It can only be an ideal transcending all personal attachments. If we call that ideal "peace," therefore, we must admit that it has little in common with what most non-pacifists mean by the word—it has more in common, I should say, with "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." A better name for the "peace" of non-pacifists would be "security."

(4). It follows that the best means to the realisation of our "peace" are not necessarily the best for the realisation of theirs. We cannot, without being disingenuous, recommend the policies that are right from our point of view to non-pacifists as right from their own. Sometimes they may happen to be. For example, there are substantial arguments against conscription at the present time, on the ground of security from war. But we employ them ourselves at our peril, since by arguing with non-pacifists on their own political ground we run the risk, first, of employing obvious rationalisations for a conviction whose real justification is elsewhere; and secondly,

Protestant impulse, the Society of Friends. For here is the one Church in the world which has solved the problem of interpreting "God's will," when final authority is no longer vested in one person. Whereas every other Protestant sect, after discarding a Head, has had to fall back on the counting of Heads, the Quakers have learned to "take the sense of the meeting." They have thereby emancipated themselves from the last compromise with power-politics and the big battalions. But to do this demands the acceptance, not of a technique, but a spirit.

of helping to strengthen that ground, when our real job is to be cutting it from under their feet.

(5). There is little, if any, chance of Pacifism ever becoming a mass-movement. For most people, the risk even of atomic conflagration is preferable to the certainty of persecution; and there is nothing dishonourable about that. But that does not greatly dismay us. Minorities can accomplish wonders, provided they are resolute and honest. Even if we cannot, without allies, achieve a peaceful society by the abolition of war, we may be able, with allies, to abolish war by building the peaceful society.

The acceptance of Pacifism involves a choice of the same order as the acceptance of Christianity involved in the time of Diocletian. Pacifism, real Pacifism, confronts us with an Either/Or, as Kierkegaard used to say. (And we recall that for Kierkegaard himself, the "Either," which was Christianity, spelled the breaking-off of his engagement to the girl he loved and a life of all but unendurable loneliness.)

The beliefs and behaviour of the early Christian ascetics—of St. Anthony, for example, who prayed to be delivered from "the remembrance of kinsfolk"—have been derided down four centuries of humanism. But one of the compensations of Pacifism is that it makes them intelligible again—and they have a very great deal to teach us; not only about the resources that may be required, but about the relation between conscience and the State, and the first principles of a peaceful civilisation. However—I once wrote a book on this subject, and this is not the place to reproduce it, even though no publisher would risk his money and his good reputation!

Ten Years Ago

Peace News, January 2, 1937.

Dr. E. W. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, has accepted the Presidency of the National Peace Council. Dr. Barnes, who has been Bishop of Birmingham since 1924, is known as one of the most outspoken advocates of peace among the leading personalities in the Churches.

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THE BARBED WIRE BREAKS

Christmas Day with a P.O.W

"I AM so grateful to you for your invitation—you don't realise what this means to me," said Hans in his Saxon dialect. My friend had taken the opportunity of Mr. Bellenger's Christmas scheme, allowing German POWs to accept invitations to English homes.

Hans is thirty, and without having volunteered for the Army, has already spent nearly ten years in uniform. I asked him when he was due for repatriation. "If I'm lucky, I might have a chance to go home next February, but that's only if the authorities keep their promises..." I could see that this POW had not much confidence in the word of the authorities. Hans recalled that when he left the POW camp in America, he thought he would soon be in Hamburg, and not Liverpool.

"Are you not afraid of going back into the Russian Zone?"

"Well, my home is there. I certainly don't like a Red dictatorship, and I can assure you that I'm not going to join any more political parties. The only thing I want is to get home." This from one of Rommel's former Afrika Korps.

Now the discussion became political. Hans expressed his views very frankly. He admitted that he preferred American democracy to British: at the same time, he and his comrades had been deeply impressed by the friendly attitude of the British people this Christmas. "We had more than seventy invitations from the civil population, in spite of the fact that they knew we were not allowed to use any public transport, and that our hosts had to sign us in and then out again at ten o'clock. A very few prisoners refused invitations, but you see these Germans won't learn; they don't realise that in meeting you and your family, they have a great opportunity to learn about your way of life."

I remarked to him that it was a

Jew, Victor Gollancz, who had done more for the POWs and the German people than they would ever have expected. "I can assure you, on behalf of all my comrades, that we admire his spirit. I would like you to give me his address, so that we can write and express our thanks."

In my next question, I referred to Pastor Niemoller and Dr. Schumacher. "Niemoller has lost the confidence of the German POWs. One day he declares that Germany alone was responsible for the war and all its consequences. A few days later, the same Niemoller denies the responsibility. How different from Dr. Schumacher. Here's a man who has not only suffered for his ideals, but who has the great courage to say what is wrong with Germany. He is not afraid to speak his own mind in spite of the occupying powers, and if there was an election in the German POW camps, Dr. Schumacher would certainly get a 100% majority."

"Do you think Germany is ripe for building her own democracy?"

Hans thought for a moment before replying. "Ja, Ja—if they only gave Germany a chance. But the news I receive from Dusseldorf concerning the food situation gets worse in every letter."

"What about the conditions in the Russian Zone, where your people are living?"

"It seems," Hans replied, "that they have enough food—but perhaps they are not able to write about the real situation. After all, there is still a censorship."

Just as Hans finished, the housewife brought in the turkey. His eyes glanced over the table. He was in no mood now to continue with our political discussion: and over and over again, this prisoner, who could hardly speak a word of English, told me in German to translate his appreciation and thanks for these hours of freedom and hospitality which he was enjoying in my friend's home.

GERD TREUHART.

NOW FOR REPATRIATION

PACIFISTS have taken a large share in the exertions made this Christmas to brighten the lives of German POWs. We could quote pages of reports sent in by groups who formed carol-parties to sing for, and with, the prisoners at their camps, and one and all speak enthusiastically of the unfeigned pleasure experienced on both sides of the barbed wire. In some cases, this was not the first Christmas Eve on which pacifists had ignored the non-fraternisation decree.

As one correspondent writes: "For many months we have had as our immediate neighbours two or three hundred desolate men with whom we were forbidden by law to have any communication. To us the carrying out of this law has been utterly impracticable and we never intended that it should be anything else. The

man who fell into bad company on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho was neighboured not by his own sectarian or racial friends, but by a foreigner with whom his race and religion had no dealings. We felt a special twentieth century call to revive the meaning of this story."

Let us, however, remember that all these gestures of goodwill towards prisoners in this country are only palliatives. They are no substitute for the return of prisoners to their own country, and a fellow-feeling that does not result in a sustained agitation for repatriation may justly be suspected of sentimentality. These prisoners are men: what they need is not pity, but respect, not charity, but justice. Let us beware of that sentimentality, which corrupts both giver and receiver, and keep in view the causes upon which we co-operate as equals.

NOTES FOR C.O.s

January 3, 1947, PEACE NEWS-5

Deputation on Conscription

ON Dec. 12, the Minister of Labour with his Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. George Brown, M.P., met a deputation from the CBCO consisting of Fenner Brockway, the Chairman of the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors, who was court-martialled four times as an absolutist in 1916-18; Michael Tippett, the composer and a sponsor of the PPU, who served a three months' sentence in 1943 for refusing to comply with a Tribunal condition; The Venerable Percy Hartill, chairman of the APF; The Lady Parmoor, and A. Joe Brayshaw.

Fenner Brockway made it clear that the deputation was wholly opposed to conscription on principle; and in raising a detailed point regarding the recognition of one class of Conscientious Objectors, no suggestion was being made that any consideration of this kind would diminish opposition to conscription as a whole. He put the viewpoint of those who believed that to accept any alternative service was tantamount to recognising a State right to conscribe for the Armed Forces.

Case for exemption

Michael Tippett, after acknowledging tolerance during the war, instanced his own sentence. He put the case of those who felt on vocational grounds unable to accept direction away from the work that they believed to be right.

Lady Parmoor pointed out that the Society of Friends, of which she was a member, had stressed for three hundred years the need for men to follow individual leading as to what was right.

Archdeacon Hartill, although willing to accept alternative service himself, nevertheless felt that the recognition of the unconditionalist was a question affecting religious liberty.

Joe Brayshaw contrasted the threat to unconditional exemption with the legislation of the two preceding Governments. America's failure to provide unconditional exemption had led to widespread imprisonment. In this country those given unconditional exemption had not failed to recognise their responsibility to the community, which was instanced by the many who served in Pacifist Service Units, the Friends Ambulance Unit and Friends Relief Service. If unconditional exemption were not provided for, many C.O.s would decline to go before Tribunals which were not empowered to give them the exemption their conscience demanded and prosecution in these circumstances would not have the public sympathy that might otherwise exist for non-compliance with conditions.

In reply the Minister stated that the question whether to retain unconditional exemption had not yet been decided. He indicated that the discussion had been timely and promised to convey the views of the deputation to the appropriate quarters.

Farewell to the "Bulletin"

With the issue for December 1946 (No. 81), the CBCO Bulletin came to an end. The Bulletin, like the CBCO itself has performed a vital service to the pacifist movement throughout the war years, and nothing could illustrate better the disinterested spirit in which it has been carried on than the Editor's decision to bring it to a close, as soon as the particular need to which it responded had passed. It is all too seldom that a successful paper or organisation resists the temptation, sooner or later, of inventing needs to justify its own continued existence: and the Bulletin has been pre-eminently successful in achieving its objects.

Its facts and figures, on all matters concerning COs, have invariably been reliable, and its articles always informative. We congratulate those who have co-operated to make it what it was, and particularly Denis Hayes, the editor, who, we understand, will soon be quitting the Board to take up other work. The continuance of military conscription necessitates the continuance of the CBCO itself, and Peace News will co-operate with it, we hope, even more closely.

The Christmas number of the CBCO Bulletin contains, besides a short history of the magazine, a message from the Rt. Hon. A. Creech Jones, M.P., an examination of the likely provisions for COs under the new Conscription Act, an article on Unconditional Exemption, and a reproduction of "Babes in Wormwood," the Panto first published in The Flowery. (Price 3d. from the CBCO, 6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1.)

WORLD ARMY NO PANACEA

THE theory that wars are caused only by sovereign states and that one army in a sovereign world will ensure peace, is exploded by Purnell Benson in the American Friends Intelligencer.

"In history," he writes, "there have been about as many wars within the borders of a single sovereign state as there have been wars between states, about as many civil wars and revolutions as international ones. Democracies have been no exception. Ancient Athens, where democracy began, was plagued with internal war, as was also Rome, whether governed by democrats or dictators. The United States, so often cited as a model for world government, fought its first war as a revolution and its bloodiest as a civil one. England, the mother of parliaments, has spawned several wars upon her own islands."

The writer notes the great difference between ordinary police action and "arresting masses of angry men determined to fight each other, a problem of restraint in which police have repeatedly shown themselves to fail."

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MEETINGS, &c.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Sq., W.C.1., Thurs., Jan. 9, 7 p.m., "Freedom from Fear." Speakers: A. J. Champion, M.P., Cmdr. Stephen King-Hall, Sir Arthur Salter, M.P., Chairman: Col. Dodds-Parker, M.P. Admission free. Some reserved seats 1s. from Federal Union, 20 Buckingham Street, W.C.2.

KINGSWAY HALL, W.C.2. Jan. 4, 4 p.m., "Atomic Energy and World Peace." Chair: Doris Lester. Speakers: Kathleen Lonsdale, FRS, Gerald Bailey, MA, Alex Wood, MA, D.Sc. Conference for young people. Organised by F.O.R. and PPU Youth Committees.

LONDON, W.C.1, Endsleigh Gardens. Discussion lectures every Sunday, 7.30 p.m. Jan. 5: "Anarchism and Agriculture." John Hewitson. London Anarchist Group.

Our Foreign Policy - and UNO

COMMENTARY CONTINUED

pattern of minimum demands. On what shall this be based?

UNO and peace

BUT, it may be said, Mr. Bevin does enunciate a very definite basis of British policy: "We have decided to construct the whole of our future relationships with the world on the basis of the United Nations." The difficulty is to know what it means. Does it mean that we will do all we can to make the United Nations effective? But effective to what end? To the preservation of world peace?

So long as the veto exists, or the Security Council does not invest another body with an authority superior to its own, in that it is not subject to the veto, so long will world-peace be no more secure than it was before 1939. It will be much less secure: for instruments of mass-destruction now exist which were subjects of remote speculation then. To say that we have decided to construct the whole of our foreign policy on U.N. is a reversion to the old futile policy of between the wars when Mr. Bevin's predecessors said: "Our policy is the League of Nations," but in circumstances of incommensurably greater danger.

No doubt Mr. Bevin really means that he is determined to do all he can to make U.N. a genuine world-authority. But it is a very unfortunate and misleading way of saying that, to say that we will base our relations with the world on U.N.

Principles essential

WHAT will happen, for example, if during the discussion of the British complaint against Albania on the Security Council, the veto is used? Will Mr. Bevin then turn round and say, as he did only a few weeks ago in New York, that it is being made impossible for Britain to base her policy on U.N., as she desired to do?

I am not suggesting, for one moment, that Mr. Bevin is not doing wisely at present in acting as though U.N. were an effective body. But I am deeply convinced that he ought on every occasion to couple with that a formal declaration of what U.N. must be in order that British foreign policy can be based on it. There are abstract and universal principles on which such a body must be based, in order that any member power can accept its decisions as binding. Unless these principles are recognised, and established in an institution, it is impossible for any nation to construct its foreign policy on U.N. It must have another principle of foreign policy altogether, whatever may be its formal professions of loyalty to U.N. And this is a very dangerous position to be in: it looks like duplicity to other people, and it confuses men's minds at home.

Veto-less authority

IT does no conceivable harm, and it may do much good, in clarifying the real issue of world-politics today, to say continually and plainly that until there is a world-authority to which the veto-power does not apply, there can be no hope for secure peace in the world; and to say, categoric-

ally, that Britain is prepared to surrender the veto.

If Russia takes that unkindly, it cannot be helped. Facts are facts: and this particular fact is of such crucial importance to the world that it cannot be reiterated too often. All the friendliness in the world, all the agreements, all the mutual congratulations, make not a ha'porth of difference to the desperate plight of the world, so long as this fact is evaded or ignored. For Britain, of all countries, to gamble on another world-war being avoided, out of politeness, or from a desire to pretend that U.N. is better than it is and things better than they seem, is to take "the primrose path that leads to the everlasting bonfire."

Ex-mistress of the sea

THERE is a plain, simple, stark moral and political issue before the world. Either an effective world-authority, for the decisive matter of atomic power—or quick perdition. Not all the conjuring tricks of the political wise-guys and corner-boys (from Professor E. H. Carr to Mr. A. J. H. Taylor inclusive) can obscure this issue from a healthy mind. It is the paramount interest of this now completely vulnerable country to set it in the forefront, for the meditation of the world, and to keep it there.

We cannot make such a declaration the basis of our foreign policy. But it would make perfectly clear why our foreign policy has to be the hand-to-mouth affair which it, in fact, is. It would cut the ground from under the feet of those who chorus that salvation lies in "being nice to Russia;" and those who, like Mr. Churchill, say that it lies in "being nice to USA." Salvation lies in one thing, and one thing only: in the reassertion of Law, and the establishment of a world-authority to formulate and enforce it.

Russian evasion

FRANKLY, I do not like the news about disarmament. I may be wrong—I hope I am—but the latest Russian move looks too much like the attempt to evade the Baruch proposals which I have feared. Mr. Gromyko has been notably silent during the Atomic Energy Commission's discussions on the provision, on which America insist, that the punishment of violators of the plan for atomic control shall not be subject to the veto. But suddenly he has submitted a resolution for the Security Council meeting on Dec. 31 (when the Atomic Commission's report is to be discussed) calling for the immediate establishment of a special Commission of the Council to implement the practical measures proposed by the General Assembly's disarmament plan.

This looks like another Russian attempt to by-pass the Atomic Commission, which is the formally constituted organ of the Security Council for dealing with atomic energy. If the Russians are trying to lose that Commission in a new body with a much vaguer reference, the attempt must be resisted. It bodes no good.

To grow or wither

MEANWHILE, let us welcome one frail harbinger of genuine peace—a solitary aconite—the reciprocal abolition of the visa between Britain and France. When we hear that the visa has likewise been abolished between Britain and Russia, we may begin to believe that deliverance is nigh.

THE WAY TO THE STARS

"Give WAAF silk stockings."

—Sunday Express.

AS the path to Hell is paved with good intentions, so apparently is the way to the Stars spanned by silken ladders, of feather-weight and nylon-strength, and easily convertible into parachutes for the return journey. Blue-stockings are definitely not wanted on this trip! All others may apply, special reserved seats for pin-ups and cover-girls.

ANY GUM, CHUM?

"Nothing will induce us to stick to the present WAAF hats."

—Group Officer Hanbury to Sunday Express.

IT would almost seem as if our American friends have departed too soon.

PARCELS FOR ABROAD

Twenty-eight thousand gift parcels for Germans reached Hamburg today from Berlin.
Daily Express, Dec. 31.

Gerald Bailey of the NPC writes:

THAT the need for immediate relief action in Germany is imperative is now generally recognised and whilst it is clear that no adequate improvement in conditions can be effected without a change in governmental and inter-governmental policies, the importance of individual efforts in supplying both material and intellectual aid cannot be over-emphasised.

The National Peace Council is aware of the urgent need for both food and clothing. It is also aware that the need for books and periodicals—for information and for the stimulus of mental and spiritual contacts with the outside world—is equally urgent.

The National Peace Council has issued a leaflet: "Germany—what can be sent and how," giving details of the various schemes now available for the relief of the physical and intellectual destitution of Germany and, in particular, of the British Zone. They will be pleased to send a copy to any of your readers on application.

From the PPU

If you do not know an individual in Germany but would like parcels to go from you to some person, PPU will supply the name and address either of a pacifist in Germany or of the family of one of the Prisoners of War here.

Precedents for civilisation

AFTER the last war the British Government issued a White Paper in which it was estimated that our blockade of Germany had caused nearly 800,000 deaths—mainly of women and children and old people. It is not easy to estimate the casualties caused by Allied bombing in Germany because German records were incomplete and often unreliable but the Americans have put the number of deaths at 305,000. Whenever the fact that our aircraft occasionally killed women and children is cast in my teeth I always produce this example of the blockade, although there are endless others to be got from the wars of the past. In all normal warfare of the past it was the common practice to besiege cities and if they refused to surrender, when called upon to do so, every living thing in them was in the end put to the sword.

Ex-Air-Marshal Sir Arthur Harris in the Liverpool Daily Post Dec. 3, 1946.

NOT ENEMIES HERE

IN North-West Germany, chance brought me outside Wescke cemetery. As I could see many flowers there, I entered it for closer inspection and came to a row of RAF graves. It was obvious they had received much care and attention, being bordered and planted with dwarf firs, and with masses of pansies and forget-me-nots.

In due course I visited other cemeteries and found the same evidence of care which had extended over a period of years. The layout of the site at Marl, with a trimmed hedge surround, dwarf shrubs dotted about the lawn and graves planted with rose bushes and ivy moved me so much that I sent for the attendant. He wished for no reward. "They are," he said softly, "not enemies here and if some day the Commission comes to take them to England I shall remember the order in which they came to rest."

"I think the people of North-West Germany will confirm their expression of sympathy. . . From 'some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England,' one may see the vast rows of silver birch crosses beyond and be aware only of the common bond of bereavement."

—Daily Telegraph, Dec. 14.

If on the other hand you are content to send your parcels without reference to any individual, PPU point out that they collect food at Dick Sheppard House, for distribution through one of the relief organisations.

A personal contact

AS an official welfare visitor to a large PoW camp I am trying to relieve the minds of many of these men who are deeply concerned as to the plight of their loved ones.

It would be of tremendous help if any of your readers who would care to send an occasional parcel of food or clothes to an individual family in Germany would send me their names and addresses. I will then supply the names and addresses of the wives of German PoWs to whom they can send these parcels.

This would not only help materially those in great distress, but would also be a further link of friendship for the future amicable relations of our two countries. I can assure those of your readers who are interested that the names and addresses supplied will be only the most necessitous one.

A. J. GOWING.

Newlands, Rearsby, Leicestershire.

Mrs. G. K. Bell, wife of the Bishop of Chichester, received in one day more than 200 tins of food for starving Europe, reported the Daily Herald.

Vindictiveness causes heavy sentences

(Continued from page one).

on "criminal charges," and it is therefore difficult to separate them from the mass of convicted people. But it is possible to disentangle certain cases which have an obvious political motive. The most numerous are men who co-operated with the German authorities by broadcasting or in other ways. Many are now in prison with sentences of ten years or upwards. In many cases they were placed in circumstances where there was considerable pressure to commit small acts of collaboration and where the consequences of such acts must have seemed remote. Some collaborated out of political sympathy with the Nazis, some out of mere weakness. But, whatever the cause, the heavy sentences they received are motivated by nothing but vindictiveness. The same applies to men and women imprisoned for offences against the wartime laws, where the sentence was perceptibly affected by the fact that they had at one time adhered to the B.U.F.

Here are two instances which have come to my knowledge. An old man was sentenced to twelve years for incitement to disaffection; the principal witness against him was a man who admitted he had been incited by the police to act as an agent provocateur. Another man was sentenced to seven years for damaging telephones in public call boxes; on the strength of his former B.U.F. affiliations this was regarded as a serious case of assisting the enemy! Personally, I have nothing but repugnance for the political opinions of these men, but I have an even greater repugnance for the injustice of which they have been victims.

It is the spirit of revenge that is maintaining the persecution of millions in the world today. And the same spirit is a sign of the strength of war neurosis. Until the hatreds shown by such detentions are replaced by true justice and fellowship, there is no hope for world peace in our day.

Therefore we should all work for an amnesty as a concrete contribution to peace, and begin by pressing at home for a reversal of the government's decision not to grant an amnesty. Canada has set an example which should be followed everywhere by the opening of the prisons and detention camps, and the abandonment of that spirit of revenge in which the seeds of future wars germinate so vigorously.

CATARRH

THIS commonest of all disease conditions amongst civilised peoples, greatly impairs mental efficiency, lowers resistance to infection, and generally debilitates its innumerable victims. The true remedy is to de-toxicate the system, restore the clean bloodstream of youth, and then reform the diet and other habits of living.

Garlic—a prescription with 5000 years of history—is a most powerful disinfecting agent; and greatly helps in neutralising and liquifying catarrh.

Send stamps 5d. for two 20-page booklets about Garlic in its modern deodorised forms which impart no taint whatever to the breath or person.

Allysol Company, Fairlight, Sussex